

fixed braces & handling emergencies

“If you are in pain or discomfort, then every effort will be made to schedule an appointment for you to see the orthodontist.”



While there are different brands of fixed braces, they work in the same way and common issues crop up. Read on to find out the answers to some commonly asked questions which arise for patients in fixed braces.

Most of these problems are not detrimental to treatment and any discomfort can be alleviated at home by using the following information.



1. Protruding Wire

Occasionally, the end of a wire will work itself out of place and irritate the mouth. Use a cotton bud or eraser to push the wire so that it is flat against the tooth. If the wire cannot be moved cover it with relief wax supplied. If the wire is causing extreme pain and you cannot see your orthodontist, as a last resort you may, cut the wire using a sharp pair of nail scissors. Use a folded tissue or gauze around the area to catch the wire and cover with relief wax if needed.

2. Irritation of lips & cheeks

New braces can be irritating to the mouth, especially when eating. A small amount of non-medicinal relief wax makes an excellent buffer between brace and mouth. Use a small piece and roll it into a ball the size of a small pea. Flatten the ball and place it completely over the area of the braces causing irritation. Avoid hot drinks as this will melt the wax. The wax is harmless if accidentally ingested.

3. Food caught in between teeth

This is not an emergency, but can be a little uncomfortable. It is easily fixed with dental floss. Try tying a small knot in the middle of the floss to help remove the food, or use your interspace (small headed) brush or toothpick to dislodge food caught between teeth and braces.

4. Loose brackets, wires or bands

If the braces have come loose in any way, you should contact your orthodontist. Brackets are the parts of braces attached to teeth with a special adhesive. The bracket can be knocked off by eating hard or crunchy foods. If the loose bracket has rotated on the wire and is sticking out and you cannot immediately reach the orthodontist, you can do a temporary fix, but it must only be done as a last resort. Use clean tweezers to slide the bracket along the wire until it is between two teeth. Rotate the bracket back to the proper position, slide it back to the centre of the tooth.

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